



MEDIA ADVISORY

**AMID FTC MOVE TOWARD BLOGGER DISCLOSURE,
CIE STUDIOS CEO AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS 'RULES OF ENGAGEMENT'
– AND WHY ADVERTISERS SHOULD EMBRACE TRANSPARENCY**

LONG BEACH, Calif. (Oct. 15, 2009) – As the Federal Trade Commission floats “truth in blogging” rules – aimed at persuading those promoting products for a fee to say so upfront – much of the blogging community has been critical of the FTC move as unnecessary and unenforceable.

Justin Choi, co-founder and CEO of Cie Studios (www.ciestudios.com), takes a different view. Choi sees the FTC’s action as an opportunity to bring authenticity and openness to a process sorely in need of both. “Whatever the final shape of the FTC’s policy and the guidelines implementing it,” he says, “disclosure is an imperative for bloggers, advertisers and anyone else making claims for – or even against – a given product.”

WHO: Justin Choi earned a business degree in Computer Information Systems (CIS) and a minor in business management from Cal Poly Pomona. He co-founded Cie Studios in 1998 as an interactive services firm providing innovative digital marketing campaigns for companies like Pioneer Electronics, Chrysler and Toyota/Scion. Choi has grown the self-funded company into a team of 40 interactive designers and developers – “a swat team” of digital inventors. Cie Studios has created large multiplayer online games, online advertising software, social media and mobile applications and online 3D visualization tools.

WHY: “Digg and a handful of blogs have already started to allow ad-sponsored content that is clearly labeled as advertising but otherwise blends in with the non-advertising content,” says Choi. “If blogs, online forums and other social media don’t provide a way for advertisers to participate, they will create demand for underhanded methods of promotion – which doesn’t serve anyone well. Solutions that encourage and enable transparency, and are effective for the advertisers, serve as a ‘release valve,’ removing the pressure from advertisers and agencies to engage in what could be considered untruthful and disingenuous advertising.

“The fact is, advertisers who want to communicate with a specific audience will find a way to do it because it’s effective, whether the endorsement is out in the open or not. Providing the option for transparent communication provides a ‘win-win’ alternative.”

WHAT: Cie Studios recently introduced PostRelease (www.postrelease.com), a sponsored post solution built around transparency and relevance. PostRelease was designed expressly to enable companies to advertise openly to effectively influence word-of-mouth forum discussions. “PostRelease embodies the principles that the FTC is now advocating,” Choi says. “We’ve created a sandbox where everyone can agree to the rules and play together. The industry needs standards and engagement guidelines – and ideally, they should be voluntary.”

WHEN: Justin Choi is available immediately for media interviews.

HOW: To speak with Justin Choi, contact:
Ken Greenberg
Edge Communications, Inc.
ken@edgecommunicationsinc.com
(818) 990-5001

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